

densely populated, seismically high-risk areas throughout the country. Knowing the history and the potential of these devastating quakes and the capriciousness of earthquake faults should motivate everyone, including surgeons who operate in an office surgical facility, to prepare *now* to safeguard the lives and premises of their immediate concern and responsibility.

There will be little anyone can do during the shaking period, but preparation beforehand will make the during and after periods easier to cope with. Being unprepared will compound the disaster.

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* * *

ONLY HUMAN

i was glad
i had taken the time
to hold the dead man's head in my hands
and comb his hair
even though i am always afraid
combing the dead fibers
will make them fall out

and i was glad
i had rolled a towel
and placed it under his gaping jaw

and that i had arranged the crisp white sheet
smoothly and neatly
across his motionless chest

for when she asked through tear-filled eyes
if she could see him and say good-bye
all i could do was nod my head
and hope my eyes were communicating the words
wedged so snugly in my throat

LU CARTER, RN®
Norfolk, Nebraska